

Chicago Sun-Times, June 22, 2004

A proposed new law transfers ownership of Lake Michigan bluffs at Fort Sheridan from the Navy to an environmental trust, Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park) said Monday.

Turning the bluffs and beaches over to Openlands will protect them from high-rise developers, Kirk said. The natural features cover two miles of shoreline at the fort's southern end.

Also protected will be endangered species, including the Canadian buffaloberry, pale vetchling, dog violet and other plants, and the piping plover, Henslow's sparrow, short-eared owl and other birds.

The bill has been passed by the House and awaits action in the Senate.

Kirk noted that Illinois has 60 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, much of it in private hands. "This new park to protect the bluffs will be one of the only original Lake Michigan shoreline habitats open to the public," he said.